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MIRAGE

Across the Bay are low-lying cliffs,
 Where stand fishermen's cottages :
 I can barely distinguish them with the naked eye.
 But to-day the cliffs are lifted, escarpt,
 Perpendicular, mysterious, inaccessible,
 And those sordid dwellings have become
 The magnificent fortified castles of Sea-kings.

SEALS

The beach ends abruptly in a spikèd point
 Over which have torn for ages,
 Unwearying, mighty toppling waves.
 Often I watch arise
 From the green translucent waters beyond,
 Round, black, glistening heads with canny eyes :—
 For a moment they stare at me in mute surprise,
 Then noiselessly disappear.
 Do they go tell their mates,
 Huddled in deep, safe, kelp-curtained caves,
 Of a strange white animal which, in frantic rages,
 Runs up and down the sands
 Shouting and tossing unwebbed hands
 And dives with a thunderous splash
 Into the swirling white-crested breakers ?

THE CEDAR-BUSH

A stunted cedar-bush on the headland clings :—
 The fierce winds of Winter strive to tear it away ;
 But it resists and digs in its roots to stay,
 Undiscouraged, full of life.
 Its never-fading green is frosted with salt spray
 From the great crashing billows below.
 On its quivering, topmost bough
 Each morning through the long Summer sings
 A tiny Song-sparrow :—
 He pours forth his melodious note
 Like a hymn to the Sea, to the Sun, to his God,
 To his near-by nesting mate.
 To my ears it seems a sweet song of happiness :
 But alas ! I may misinterpret ; I do not know—
 It may be the expression of his heart's despair,
 The utterance of bitter woe.

NATHAN HASKELL DOLE.